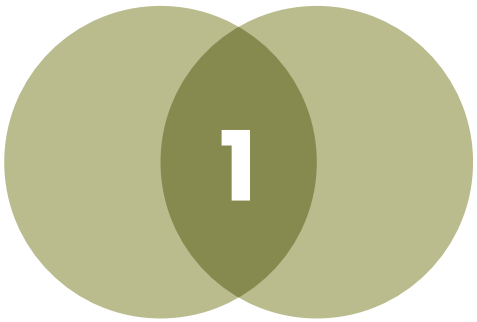

The Great Lakes Region (GLR) Security Complex: Lessons for the African Solutions for Peace and Security (AfSol) Approach

Lawrence Mhandara

Acknowledgements

The author thanks the editorial team and the anonymous reviewers for their insights and expertise that greatly improved the paper. However, if any remaining errors are found, they are entirely my own and should not be attributed to them.

About the author

Lawrence Mhandara is a holder of Doctor of Philosophy degree and a senior lecturer at the University of Zimbabwe. He is contactable on email address (lmhandara@gmail.com) and via post at Department of Political and Administrative Studies, MP167, Mt Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe.

Keywords

Great Lakes Region; Regional Security Complex Theory; security interdependence

Abstract

The Great Lakes Region (GLR) appears to be an arena of intractable conflicts that have continued to evade durable solutions or have resisted mitigating interventions. To this end, the GLR poses challenges to AfSol's commitment to building sustainable peace on the continent. This paper applies the Regional Security Complex Theory to establish a pattern of security interdependence in order to discern lessons for the AfSol approach. This will be done using a minimalist definition of the GLR that focuses on four states: Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Uganda. Findings show that the current state of security distress is a result of various structural and proximate factors such as colonial impact, political culture, ethnicity and weak state systems that take advantage of geographical proximity to cause the spread of conflicts and insecurity through conditions of clustering, contagion/diffusion and connectedness. The multiplicity of actors in the four states and the various rebel movements in each define the dynamics of security, giving rise to a regional insecurity complex more so than a security complex. The existence of AfSol, however, continues to offer some modicum of hope if lessons are to be learnt from the experience of the four countries. The lessons are that i) common factors take advantage of geographical proximity to socialise the GLR states into a region of insecurity; ii) the GLR is a conflict formation security complex; iii) ethnicity is instrumentalized by political elites; iv) the rebel problem is linked to state actors; and v) the old agenda for security dominates the GLR security complex.

Introduction

The GLR appears to be an arena of intractable conflicts that have for long evaded durable solutions or resisted mitigating interventions. To this end, the GLR continues to pose challenges to AfSol's commitment to building sustainable peace on the continent. The GLR has two zones – the core and the periphery. Burundi, Uganda, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) belong to the former and Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, Central Africa Republic, Republic of Congo, Sudan and South Sudan to the latter. This area is along Central Africa's Great Rift Valley, stretching in a south-north direction from Lake Tanganyika in the south to Lake Edward in the north (Lermachand, 2009; p. 1). This submission is centred on the minimalist definition of the area that focuses on the core because of the intense negative patterns of security interdependence located there. The four countries in the core of the region are some of the most affected by recurring violence and armed conflict in Africa.

Rwanda has had a long history of ethnic violence, stretching as far back as the 1959 revolution. Burundi, with its own ethnic tensions, has also experienced bloody conflicts along the Tutsi-Hutu divide; more prominently demonstrated in the civil war fought between 1993 and 2005. The DRC is renowned for its perpetual conflicts, especially in the eastern side of its borders, which had led to a continental war in 1998. Uganda has also not been spared from civil strife, especially in the northern parts. Because of the web of conflicts in these states, the countries have been united into a region of insecurity mediated through geographical proximity. Geographical proximity catalyses the spread of insecurity through three transnational dimensions identified by Forsberg (2016), namely, clustering, diffusion/contagion and connectedness. The ways in which regional differences in conflict and cooperation develop is now more a matter of local rather than global politics (Gleditsch, 2002). Gleditsch's core argument is that the density of different types of positive and negative interactions will tend to

be higher and, therefore, more relevant between geographically proximate actors than between distant ones (2007; p. 295). Several works have found evidence of the spatial linkage of security, in the sense that the risk of conflict increases when neighbouring states are involved in conflict (for example Forsberg, 2016; Gleditsch, 2002; Salehyan & Gleditsch, 2006), and neighbouring conflict has been suggested as useful for predicting conflict or generating 'early warning' systems (Esty et al, 1998, as cited in Gleditsch, 2007; p. 295). With emphasis on regions gaining traction in the post-Cold War, the GLR security complex should be revisited to expose the link between geographical proximity and insecurity. Indeed, African security analysis and therefore its solutions should start with regional analysis because "the regional level stands more clearly on its own as the locus of conflict and cooperation …" (Morgan, 1997; p. 6-7, as cited in Buzan & Waever, 2003; p. 9). This approach is particularly relevant in the peace and security context that is marked by a strong-willed shift towards AfSol.

The driving force behind the AfSol is the philosophy which insists it is within Africa that solutions to security challenges must be sought. Over the years, this has translated into the now popular maxim 'African Solutions to African Problems', meant for Africans to take the lead in conflict prevention, management and resolution. This position was coherently championed by African contemporaries like Mugabe and Mbeki at the turn of the millennium. The concern of African leaders and institutions is centred on the need to roll back the long history of destructive conflicts on the continent and to dispel the myth that Africans were or are incapable of solving their own challenges.

The transformation of the OAU into the AU in 2002 paved the way for the institutionalisation of the AfSol. The decision adopted at the 2009 African Heads of State and Government meeting in Tripoli defined the AfSol agenda in formal and specific terms as it focused on 'eliminating conflicts in Africa and promoting sustainable peace'. The same axiom was reiterated by prominent diplomats on the continent, including the former African Union Commission Chairperson, Jean Ping, who stated that "the solutions to African problems are found on the continent and nowhere else" (Remarks by the former AU Commission Chairperson during the AU Summit on 15 July 2012, as cited in Ndabuisi, 2016; p. 2). The AfSol approach has three pillars: commitment to finding lasting solutions to African conflicts, norm and value sharing and the primacy of African actors and mechanisms in finding solutions, that is, African ownership in positive handling of conflicts (Rupiya, 2016; p. 6; Institute of Peace and Security Studies Report, 2014; Kambudzi, 2013; p. 40). African ownership is meant to minimise external interest in local conflicts while accepting such external actors as partners in the search for sustainable peace.

AfSol has a dual character. On one hand, it expresses itself as an aspiration by Africans to achieve their desires (idealism) and on the other, it has a practical dimension in that it reflects Africa's collective, home-grown efforts in peace and security (Institute of Peace and Security Studies Report, 2014). In recent years, the search for solutions for peace and security has expanded into the domain of governance (democracy, human rights and the rule of law), informed by the AU Agenda 2063 and related initiatives. It is rooted in Pan-African ideology and African identity, while still working within the global domain. Despite its good intentions, the AfSol approach has faced a number of challenges in conflict affected areas, including the GLR. The challenges that stifle the innovativeness and effectiveness of interventions include the lack of

practical commitment among African institutions to implement and support local solutions; most initiatives rely on partnerships with the international community and the 'soft' approach toward incumbents who contribute to conflicts (South Africa Institute of International Affairs, 2019). Despite the challenges, there is still room for AfSol to deduce lessons from past failures and reshape the future of Africa towards a trajectory of peace.

The objective of this paper is to analyse the peace and security dynamics in the GLR through the lens of the Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) and to generate lessons for the AfSol approach based on the observed pattern of security interdependence. The paper has four sections:

The first section provides the theoretical basis upon which the units in the GLR can be understood. This entails reviewing the key assumptions of the RSCT. This section shows how geographic space and security are linked such that challenges and solutions to peace and security in geographically proximate states cannot be isolated from one another. The second section explores the key actors that determine the patterns of security interdependence in the region. The next section focuses on how insecurity is spread through clustering, diffusion and connectedness among the four GLR states. This is followed by a summary of key observations about the security complex and potential lessons for the AfSol. The final part is the conclusion.

Regional Security Complexes – A Theoretical Detour

The break in history that marked the end of the Cold War impacted the pattern of international security. To paint a proper portrait of global security, one needs to understand the 'international' and its sub-systems independently as well as their interactions, noting that "the regional level of security has become both more autonomous and more prominent in international politics and that the end of the Cold War accelerated this process" (Katzenstein, 2000, as cited in Buzan and Waever, 2003; p. 3). The evaluation of regions as independent units of analysis is associated with the RSCT. Its significant contribution is challenging the dominant systemic theories, especially neo-realism, by relegating security analysis from the global level to regional level using the geographically fixed units called Regional Complexes. The RSCT enables a proper understanding of regional structures as nuanced units of analysis in international security.

The theory distinguishes between the system-level interplay of global powers, whose capabilities enable them to transcend distance, and the sub-system level interplay of lesser powers whose main security environment is their local region. Security complexes may well be extensively permeated by global powers, but their regional dynamics nonetheless have a substantial degree of autonomy from the patterns set by global powers. The implication is that while global powers have capabilities that allow them to reach any part of the global system in pursuit of their interests, the power to influence all countries in a region may not be possible because of local dynamics that are not amenable to great power influence. This limits the penetrative effects of global power interests on local dynamics. Less intrusive policies from great powers bestow more independence on regions. This has sometimes played out in regions insisting on the respect of their complete sovereignty from great powers in a manner that is strikingly similar to regional exceptionalism. Thus, the post-Cold War period has witnessed more participants in global security with the more prominent role assumed by regions.

The central idea in the RSCT is that, since most threats travel more easily over short distances than over long ones, security interdependence is normally patterned into regionally based clusters called security complexes. A regional security complex is defined as a "set of units whose major processes of securitisation and desecuritisation are so interlinked that their security problems cannot reasonably be analyzed or resolved apart from each other" (Buzan and Waever, 2003; p. 43). The processes of securitisation and thus the degree of security interdependence are more intense between the actors inside such complexes than they are between actors inside the complex and those outside it. The RSCT suggests a theoretical schema in which security concerns tie within a geographically defined area (territoriality) where geographical distance is of paramount importance, placing emphasis on proximity and the distance effect to understand security relations. This argument may also be related to Tobler's First Law (TFL) of geography. Originally promulgated in Tobler's article published in 1970, the law states that "everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than distant things" (Waters, 2017). Tobler was proposing that this was the most important law in geography and that physical distance was the most important variable governing the influence of one entity on or over another. The regional security complex defines the boundaries of security interaction; instead of linking geographical space to politics (geo-politics), it links geography to security (geo-security).

Significant to note here is that the RSCT is rooted in the traditional security paradigm because its primary referent object is the state. A caveat is useful here; that in the case of the GLR, it is impossible to analyse security relations at the exclusion of non-state actors. I therefore adapt the RSCT to include non-state actors into the security matrix, to better appreciate the dynamics requiring AfSol attention.

The patterns of security interaction and dynamics in any regional security complex can be located along a continuum, depending on whether the defining security interdependence is driven by amity or enmity. At the negative end lies conflict formation, in which interdependence arises from fear, rivalry and mutual perception of threat. At the centre lie security regimes in which actors will treat each other as potential threats but have made reassurance arrangements to reduce the security dilemma among them. At the positive end of the spectrum lies a security community in which actors no longer expect to use force in their relations with each other.

Key Actors

Besides the four state actors (DRC, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi), the region's security interdependence also involves non-state actors. The most prominent non-state actors (rebel and insurgency groups) are:

Allied Democratic Forces (ADF)

After Museveni came to power in Uganda in 1986, one challenge he faced was how to manage discord in the Muslim community, one that was deeply divided and politicised throughout the 1980s. The divisions were exacerbated by the emergence of the Tabliq Movement which challenged traditional Ugandan Muslims' understandings of Islam. President Museveni's efforts to control the community led to violent confrontation in 1991, followed by the arrest and incarceration of the Tabliqs (Titeca and Fahey, 2016; p. 15). Upon release from

prison, one of the Tabliqs, Jamal Mukulu, established the Salaf Foundation, which consisted of an armed wing, the Uganda Muslim Freedom Foundation (UMFF), which was in turn overrun by the Ugandan army (Chande, 2008, as cited in Titeca & Fahey, 2016; p. 15). Its leaders subsequently fled to the DRC where they renamed their movement as the ADF. At the same time, they formed alliances with anti-Museveni groups in Uganda. Because it is an off-shoot of the Uganda Salafist Movement, it has retained its Islamist ideology. It seeks to overthrow the Ugandan government and has remained domiciled in the chaotic Eastern DRC since then. The group has been responsible for violent acts in the DRC and straddling into Uganda, killing civilians on either side. It has also attacked the UN Stabilisation Mission in Congo (MONUSCO) and killed peacekeepers. The Uganda army had entered Eastern DRC between 1998 and 2017 in pursuit of the ADF but it has failed to defeat the rebels. In 2018, Uganda accused the DRC and the UN for preserving the ADF, opening possibilities for a future return of Ugandan forces into the DRC.

Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR)

This is predominantly a Hutu rebel group composed in part of former Rwandan soldiers and Hutu militias who fled to the DRC after the 1994 civil war between the Rwanda Armed Forces and the Interahamwe militia against the RPF (International Crisis Group (ICG), 2005). The group's original objective was to overthrow the Rwandan government by force, ousting the RPF and returning ethnic Hutu political leaders to power (Le Sage, 2007). However, as the FDLR evolved and the RPF consolidated its control of Rwanda, its priorities shifted toward calling for an inter-Rwandan dialogue and a grant of security for refugees to return to Rwanda (ICG, 2009). When the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) was formed in 2006, representing Tutsi interests in the DRC and beyond, it declared FDLR an enemy. Beginning in late 2008, due to gross human rights violations and the security concern posed to the DRC and Rwanda, the two governments cooperated militarily against both CNDP and FDLR, resulting in the collapse of CNDP and the weakening of FDLR (Dagne, 2011; Spittaels & Filip, 2008). In 2009 and 2010, FDLR's leaders were arrested in Germany and France, thereby collapsing its political wing. The FDLR, albeit significantly weakened, continues to remain a security issue for both DRC and Rwanda, although it announced in November 2013 that it is potentially willing to disarm, along with other armed groups, following the surrender of M23. In 2015, the FDLR was accused of training the youth wing of Burundi›s CNDD, raising fears of a repeat case of genocide, and leading to over 100,000 Burundians fleeing into neighbouring countries (Project on Violent Conflict, 2015). Uganda is accused by Rwanda of supporting the group, with its long-term goal of regime change against President Kagame's government. During Kabila's reign, Rwanda has also occasionally accused DRC of supporting the rebels.

Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)

This is a rebel group operating in northern Uganda. It also has presence in the DRC and other neighbouring countries. The LRA was the end product of Museveni's successful rebellion against the Lutwa government. Aggrieved by the defeat, Lutwa's army, dominated by the Acholi ethnic group, fled home to the north and organised into rebels groups that ultimately coalesced around the

LRA (Margaret, 2010; p. 15). The group emerged in 1988 from the remnants of the Holy Spirit Movement Army founded by Alice Auma Lakwema. The group first operated as the Ugandan Christian Army and adopted the name LRA in 1992. It launched a brutal rebellion that sought to depose Museveni's government and rule the country according to the Biblical Ten Commandments. Sustained military campaigns by the Ugandan military have weakened the group but it remains functional. Its remnants are hosted in the eastern parts of DRC.

Mai Mai Militias

This refers to a range of armed groups in DRC, predominantly present in the eastern parts, in particular North and South Kivu provinces. The historical sentiment among the militias is to fight against oppression and colonial conquest. These are self-protection armed community groups that emerged in the 1960s with the support of some members in Patrice Lumumba's government (Dunn, 2002 as cited in de Heredia, 2017; p. 127). During the first and second Congo wars, most of the militias fought in defence of the government against the rebels and their foreign backers. The groups remained autonomous from the Congolese army but shifted allegiance over the years to the extent where most of the groups have now developed an anti-government stance. The militarisation of civilian life in the Congo has set citizens on a path of permanent armed conflict (Misako, 2008 as cited in de Heredia, 2018; p. 128). The imperative of self-defence is easier to justify because of the insecurity provoked by rebel groups present in the DRC and the omnipresent threat of foreign intervention. The challenge of the Mai Mai emanates from the diversity of the groups. Some abide by a strict code of conduct and are attached to an agenda of self-defence and liberation while others are predatory, implicated in systematic abuse of the population they purport to protect. Other groups have been used by former DRC governments as proxies in their conflicts with the country's neighbours (Hoebeke et al, 2009, as cited in de Heredia, 2017; p. 128). Despite several national and international efforts to disarm the militias, their role as vectors of self-defence and political participation is still prevalent in the DRC. Their political objectives are however eclectic; ranging from anti-government sentiments and income generation to maintaining social control of the population (Verwejen, 2015; Hoffmann, 2007; Jourdan 2004, as cited in de Heredia, 2017; p. 129).

Mouvement du 23 Mars (M23)

This group was formed in 2012, emanating out of the Rwanda-backed Tutsi CNDP, itself a successor to another Rwanda-backed outfit called the Rally for Congolese Democracy (RCD) based in Eastern DRC. The group worked against the central government until 2013, when it was defeated by the DRC armed forces, with assistance from MONUSCO. Unfortunately, the remnants of the defeated M23 rebels have fled to Rwanda and Uganda and have become a time bomb. Rwanda and Uganda were implicated by a 2012 UN Report as the backers of the rebel group. Rwanda has a history of interference in the eastern DRC region, first through direct military involvement during the first and second Congo wars and then by supporting predominantly Tutsi rebel groups fighting the central government in Kinshasa. Rwanda cut ties with the M23 rebels when the US and other governments threatened to cut aid to the country. Nonetheless, even when the West has pressured Rwanda to stop supporting Congolese rebels,

Kagame's economic successes reduce his incentives to collaborate with DRC authorities and work in favour of peace in the region. As a result, Rwanda has remained hawkish on Eastern DRC issues (Ghins, 2019).

Republican Forces of Burundi (FOREBU)

This is an anti-Burundi government group. It was formed in 2015 following the failed coup attempt by Burundian military defectors. It established itself in December 2015 in Eastern DRC and mostly recruited from Burundi nationals (mainly Tutsi) living in refugee camps. It is, nevertheless, a mixed-ethnic movement. There were allegations from the DRC opposition that FOREBU was also supported by Joseph Kabila's government (Anderson, 2017). Rwanda's support has also not been ruled out, given the friction between Presidents Kagame and Nkurunzinza. In 2017, FOREBU changed its name to Popular Forces for Burundi (FPB) as part of its re-organisation.

Rwanda National Congress (RNC)

This is a movement led by Rwanda's prominent dissidents and is designated as a rebel group by the Government of Rwanda. Its leaders, however, argue that it is only a political party. The organisation was formed in 2010 by Kagame's former allies in the ruling RPF. In 2019, Uganda has been openly accused by Rwanda of succouring the group.

Such varied non-state actors and their complicated relationships with state actors illustrate that the GLR is a typical conflict formation. Patterns of security interdependence are shaped by rivalry, fear and mutual perceptions of threat that become more pronounced because of geographic proximity.

Geographical Proximity and Insecurity in the GLR

Literature on conflict suggests that geographical proximity links states in a web of conflict and insecurity through three transnational dimensions: contagion or diffusion, clustering and connectedness (Forsberg, 2016). Firstly, geographical proximity encourages the spread of insecurity through contagion/diffusion. The essence of contagion is that an internal conflict in one location alters the possibility of another internal conflict occurring in another location at a later point in time (Forsberg, 2016; p.7). What is it about conflict in a neighbouring state that increases the risk that another state will experience conflict? The increase in risk could stem from direct contagion. Direct contagion takes the form of direct spill-over of conflict across borders and is linked to the onset of a new conflict. Spill-over effects include arms and refugee flows (Salehyan and Gleditsch, 2006; Lisher, 2005, as cited in Forsberg, 2016) and economic decline in neighbouring states (Murdoch & Sandler, 2004, as cited in Forsberg, 2014b). Refugee flows, for example, disrupt the demographic balance in the host state, intensifying competition over limited resources or through the militarisation of refugee camps. The onset of a civil conflict in one state often leads to an increased availability of cheap arms, which can then easily be transferred to neighbouring states where aggrieved groups may be encouraged to initiate violent conflict (Forsberg, 2016: p.7). It has also been concluded that arms and mercenaries are likely to freely move back and forth between countries that share a long border which is difficult to police and monitor. Contagion may also be indirect, working

through a process whereby a conflict in one country provides lessons, inspiration and clues for actors in another state to choose to pursue their goals through violence (Byman & Pollack, 2008, as cited in Forsberg, 2014a). However, the effect is difficult to establish as more intense conflict in the neighbourhood may also deter rather than inspire groups in neighbouring states.

Conflict by contagion primarily spreads to countries which are already at risk of conflict, and is less likely to spread to countries with a low risk in terms of domestic conditions. Braithwaite (2010; p. 363) empirically demonstrates that high levels of state capacity such as "stability, control, protection from predation, the extraction of resources and the ability to adapt and respond to unexpected crises" make a state better able to resist contagion. States with these capacities are able to resolve internal conflicts and to efficiently monitor and control their borders, thereby preventing movement of arms and rebels across borders (Fearon & Laitin, 2003, as cited in Cunningham & Seymour, 2012). Insurgencies have the opportunity to mobilise in peripheral areas inside weak states combined with minimal police or military presence.

The overall political context prevailing in a region is also key to ascertaining the barriers against support or intrusion by regional actors in the affairs of other states. Conflict and cooperation cannot ignore the regional context within which domestic institutions develop and local relations unfold. The more constrained the political leaders in a region, the stronger the ex-ante barriers against involvement in the disputes inside neighbouring states (Gleditsch, 2002). Conversely, states in a more autocratic region, where leaders face few formal constraints on intervention, have a higher risk of political conflicts escalating to violence. Therefore, the existence of transnational political linkages in the form of less democratic political institutions engenders the risk that one country will experience a civil conflict just like its neighbours (Gleditsch, 2007; p. 298).

Transnational ethnic linkages are risk factors that encourage contagion (Gleditsch, 2007). External interventions in conflicts often seem motivated by efforts to support ethnic kin in other states, while ethnic kin and migrants in other states have often played an important role in also mobilizing and financing insurgencies in neighbouring states. Although ethnic kin in principle could be located in many countries, supporting insurgencies is much more difficult for communities far from the conflict country. Austvoll (2005, as cited in Gleditsch, 2007; p. 297) confirms that countries with shared ethnic ties to actors in civil war are much more likely to intervene in ongoing conflicts. When an ethnic group involved in armed conflict has kin members living in a nearby state, there is an increased possibility that the kin group in that state will also engage in armed conflict (Forsberg, 2014a). The rationale for this is that such groups are more likely than others to be inspired to increase their own demands. This is because the bonds and similarities that these groups share across borders become salient when conflict breaks out. Contagion processes are more likely when transnational ethnic groups exist; such groups may work as "conflict transmitters" (Brown, 1996; 595, as cited in Forsberg, 2014b; p. 146; Forsberg, 2014b; p. 149-150). Hence, all else being equal, the expectation is that the risk of civil conflict should be higher when more ethnic groups are found on both sides of an international border (Gleditsch, 2007; p. 289-299). Transnational linkages may also become instrumentalized by political actors. The core idea of instrumentalism is that ethnicity is neither inherent in human nature nor of intrinsic value (Varshney, 2007; p. 283-84; Fearon, 2006; Horowitz, 1998). Ethnicity masks a deeper core of

interests which may be economic or political. Ethnicity is useful for gaining political power and/or economic benefits and this is why it is often deployed in multi-ethnic societies. Ethnicity becomes a focal point and its mobilisation requires a coordination of expectations. This responsibility is often assumed by charismatic ethnic leaders.

Secondly, geographically proximate states are easily affected by conflict through connectedness. Contagion suggests a specific process involving a sequence of actions and a direction from one state to another, while connectedness relates to a process by which actors from different conflicts may start cooperating with each other because of similar goals, a common enemy or shared common bonds through ethnic or ideological affiliation (Forsberg 2016). Over time, there may be an incentive for certain actors, such as illicit dealers and mercenaries, to benefit from conflict. Trans-border connections between security issues and actors within a region are referred to as a regional conflict complex (Wallestern and Sollenberg, 1998, as cited in Forsberg 2016). The key feature of such a complex is that conflicts are mutually reinforcing, to the extent that it may be impractical to solve just one without considering the regional aspects. External involvement and support complicates conflicts in that internal contradictions become protracted and intensified, resist settlement and engender the risk of escalation into an international conflict. An actor may provide support in solidarity with another or to destabilise another government in a neighbouring state. Proxy wars, however, often tend to be two-way. War economies are formed when economic activity is highly militarized and resources are mobilized to finance warring groups (Ballentine et al, 2003; p. 9, as cited in Gleditsch, 2007).

Thirdly, conflicts and insecurity take advantage of geographical adjacency through clustering in space and time. Spatial clustering indicates that the likelihood of armed conflict in a country partly depends on the presence of armed conflicts in its neighbourhood. This means that a country is more likely to experience an eruption of internal conflicts when one or more of its neighbours experience civil strife. A country located with 'bad neighbours' (Brown, 1996, as cited in Forsberg 2016; p.6 & Gleditsch, 1996) is more likely to experience armed conflict as compared to a country located in a region which is predominantly at peace. Clustering of insecurity is explained by the existence of countries that are spatially close to each other and have similar contextual factors such as political systems and economic structures (Gleditsch, 2002).

The insights gleaned from this theoretical literature are useful for providing an analytical framework for linking spatial proximity to security interdependence in the GLR. The conflicts in the GLR are on-going and intractable at both intrastate and interstate levels. Data shows that from 1960 to 2018, 101 conflict-episodes involving both state and non-state actors, including communal groups, were recorded in the GLR: 35 in Uganda; 32 in the Democratic Republic of Congo; 23 in Burundi, and 11 in Rwanda, while the 1990s and the 2000s account for three quarters of these conflict episodes (Lumumba, 2019). The prevalence and recurrence of conflicts in the GLR defies the trend in most of the other regions of the continent, in which there has been successful prevention, management and resolution of most conflicts since the end of the 1990s (Carter & Strauss, 2019; Szayna et al, 2017).

The thrust of AfSol is concerned with building sustainable peace. The first step in strengthening the AfSol is thus to understand the linkage between geographical proximity and insecurity. The following paragraphs attempt to link the calamities in

the four states to factors that take advantage of geographical proximity to spread insecurity through contagion, clustering and connectedness.

The GLR as a Cluster

Most of the aforementioned insecurities arise from acts of direct violence in the four geographically proximate states that share common political systems founded on the colonial experience. The history of colonialism may have set in place particular configurations of conflict which take on path dependency and are particularly hard to break, even long after the colonial period is over (Ruane & Todd, 2003). The three colonial powers responsible for the four territories under study, namely Belgium, Britain and Germany, produced three conflict-generating factors related to political and ideological aspects as well as to juridical statehood (Shyaka, 2008; p. 6-7). The viciousness of the colonial state was underpinned by a common interest to defend white settler privileges that had to be sustained through elaborate strategies steeped in the subjugation of the Africans. It was a system designed along racial lines and one which was ready to employ violence with impunity when faced with political dissent, especially calls for decolonisation. The system was then preserved through the deconstruction and decimation of indigenous political and peace building structures. Belgium was implicated in the assassination of Africans who were delegitimising its colonial policies in Rwanda, DRC and Burundi. In Rwanda, the involvement of Belgium in the killing of King Rudahigwa in 1959 led to the revolution which marked the beginning of open resentment between the Tutsis and Hutus. The inter-ethnic antagonism would later spread into neighbouring countries, especially Burundi, demonstrating a contagious effect. The Belgians also had a hand in the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in 1961, which destabilised the DRC immediately after decolonisation. Political actors in the four countries may have learnt from colonial experience to resort to violence when faced with internal conflict, and the lessons have been transmitted from one generation of political leaders to the next through political socialisation.

Colonialism also expressed itself through the practice of 'divide and rule' in the four countries, especially through politicisation of ethnicity. The colonial masters did not only invent false ideological justification to oppress Africans, such as their presumed genetic and cultural inferiority, but they also structured the territories around identities. Belgium used and augmented previous ethnic distinctions to define the local ruling elite, going as far as giving identity cards to distinguish the Tutsi and the Hutu in both Burundi and Rwanda. The identity-based antagonism, intensified by colonialism, is linked to the construction of ethno-centric states and exclusive societies in Rwanda and Burundi. Populations have been socialised to intensify the divisions, to hate and to resolve conflicts through violence.

Juridical statehood relates to how the colonial approach disregarded the convergence of social environments that demarcated traditional African kingdoms. In so doing, the colonial systems were significantly arbitrary and absorbed different groups under the same colonial frontiers. Subsequently, the post-colonial integration of such communities has been constantly challenged or has produced deadly clashes, as unnatural unions have been historically imposed on the people. For example, people of Rwandan descent were scattered in different territories and their exclusion, or general sense of it, has been attributed to certain violent conflicts, making colonialism a significant source of insecurity. The artificial boundaries imposed by colonial rule

may also feed into the explanation for the structural problem of state weakness in the four states.

Actors in the four states also share a similar political culture of armed rebellion. Political culture is a set of attitudes, beliefs and orientations which guide political activity and significantly inform the set of rules that determine behaviour in a political system. The GLR is a political system defined by a distinct political culture that is common in the four states. Power is concentrated in the hands of former rebel movements and leaders. Elite competition is mostly mediated through armed rebellion as compared to other regions. The support rendered to rebel groups by states led by former rebel leaders themselves suggests a strong tendency to institutionalise this culture in these four adjacent countries. In Burundi, the two Hutu-dominated rebel groups, National Council for the Defence of Democracy and Forces for the Defence of Democracy (CNDD-FDD), which fought the Tutsi-dominated institutions during the civil war, only transformed into a political party in 2005. Understanding this legacy is part of the explanation as to why a wider range of spaces in the region are occupied by rebel groups who have been socialised into political competition and why armed rebellion is accepted as a suitable route to attain political office. President Nkurunzinza, a key figure of the rebellion in Burundi, is a role model who endears future leaders into emulating his political path which is now viewed as a symbol of success in Burundian politics. In Uganda, President Museveni was the leader of the National Resistance Movement/National Resistance Army (NRM/NRA) and in Rwanda, President Kagame led the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) in the civil war against the Rwandan government. This strengthens the resolve of rebel leaders to invest in violence as they correlate such activities to rewarding political outcomes. Armed rebellion is frequently the preferred mode of mediating competition for those pursuing political power and they often seek the support of former rebel leaders. The history of political change in the four countries is a history of violent takeovers of power. The region is thus entrapped in abnormal politics which heightens the risk for onset of further conflict.

Contagion Factors and Risks

The insecurity in the region can be best viewed as a series of local and national conflicts, in which political elites have taken advantage of transnational ethnic linkages that tend to merge and intertwine through the weak state system in the four countries. Weak institutions of government are highly predisposed to insecurity. The presence of weak state systems in geographical proximity incarnates in the lack of capacity to effectively deal with threats to security. State weakness in the DRC largely emanates from weak sovereign control of the territory. The DRC occupies the geographic centre of the region but lacks control over its vast territory and it is noted that “the absence of territorial control, porous borders, very poor communication between the centre and the periphery are noteworthy aspects of its weak state status” (Reyntjens, 2005). The unclaimed space, manifesting in the satellisation and fragmentation of provinces from the centre, is then taken over by non-state actors – militias, warlords, illicit traffickers of small arms, rebels and other insecurity entrepreneurs. The eastern part of the DRC is notorious for the illegal exploitation, trafficking of natural resources, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, illegal armed groups, sexual/gender-based violence and forced population displacement (ISS Report, 2012). The DRC lacks the morphology of a cohesive state. Thus, while the defeat of the largest local rebel group in the DRC, Mouvement du 23 Mars (M23),

in November 2013 was widely celebrated, it only served to further fragment the armed group landscape. By 2013, there were more than 70 groups active in the region (Jason, Verweijen & Baaz, 2013). Its fragility is also a source of insecurity for its neighbours because of the presence of transnational rebel groups that threaten other states. As an example, in December 2017, the Uganda People's Defence Forces (UPDF) made an unexpected foray into the DRC in pursuit of the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) (Mpagi, 2017).

State fragility in Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda partly emanates less from ineffective territorial control and more from the questions of power and legitimacy. Exclusive governance institutions have resulted in ethnocentric states (mostly constructs of ethnic groups) that express themselves within a shrunken political base of authority and eroded legitimacy (Lemarchand, 1997). This is a historical pattern in Rwanda, a template that was defined and sustained by successive Hutu governments since 1961. Similar exceptionalism and particularism was common practice for the Tutsi governments in Burundi. The hierarchical state systems in both countries are a source of superiority and inferiority feelings that are unsustainable in the long-term, as insecurity entrepreneurs will continue to exploit this fault line. Generally, both Burundi and Rwanda have failed to move on from the political mentality informed by the fear of the past. It has been difficult to entirely go beyond the discourse of the genocide, and such tensions may lead to yet another explosive fallout that will have deadly regional security implications. On its part, Uganda's regional divide between the Bantu and the Nilotes explains the restiveness of the northern parts of the country where rebellion has been common. The Nilotes have a strong connection to the state at the exclusion of the Bantus, a divide created by British indirect rule and one the 1987 revolution has gratuitously failed to roll back.

The convergence of weak states in the GLR creates a regional security complex with susceptible and multiple security threats. State weakness in this sense is defined as a failed process of state building in the region when evaluated against indicators of statehood, such as the ability of the state to maintain sovereign authority over its territory; to provide a source of national identity; to host the capacity to mobilise resources and serve as an arena for politics; and to be the guarantor of security (Khadiagala, 2017; Katumanga, 2012, as cited in ISS Report, 2012). State weakness may also be part of the explanation as to why the GLR experiences a paradox of democracy and elections that are triggering violence, instead of entrenching good governance and contributing to stability. This can be attributed to weaknesses of the institutions that are mandated to conduct credible elections and to produce legitimate results. Instead, processes to encourage democracy and scheduled elections usually trigger new tensions and rejuvenate old ones.

Contagion is also encouraged by ethnicity; a conspicuous fault line that cuts across the national boundaries of the four states. The presence of large numbers of refugees in each of the four core countries with collective ethnicities and memories of violence is connected to regional security patterns. After the 1959 Rwandan Revolution, the Hutu attack on the Tutsis created a huge outflow of the latter into Uganda, Burundi and one of the periphery countries of the region, Tanzania. The suppression of the Hutu rebellion by the Tutsi government in Burundi between 1965 and 1972 resulted in a massive Hutu migration into Rwanda, exacerbating the already tense Hutu-Tutsi antagonism in the country. A common trend is how a history of ethnic contradictions has become a conflict catalyst.

It is also possible that ethnicity has been instrumentalised by rational politicians. The existence of ethnic differences is not a sufficient cause of conflict, as some regions which are ethnically diverse have managed to maintain peace. The contours of ethnicity are fluid, and ethnic coalitions mostly emerge for short term political gains. In most cases, expansionist ethnic agendas from political elites take advantage of the existence of transnational ethnic groups that straddle the four states. History is usually reconstructed so that blame can be attributed to a certain ethnic group in order to 'legitimate' a cause for retribution. Selective portrayal of historical events legitimises action against other groups without putting issues into their proper historical context. Conflicts take place mostly because political actors have strategically manipulated ethnicity for the sake of political power or economic gains (Varshney, 2007; p. 283-84; Fearon, 2006; Horowitz, 1998). This is a significant risk which makes the four states susceptible to future conflicts.

The Elements of Connectedness

The key dimensions in connectedness are war economies, external support and proxy warfare (Forsberg, 2016; p. 12-13). In war economies, predation, rent-seeking and illicit transfers of goods and services become prevalent. The war economy has a strong transnational character centred on illegal cross-border trade in natural resources and arms. The motivation of financial gain and profit from continued instability may explain the prevalence of conflict in some countries and not others. Arms are also an important trade commodity in war economies, as they are often procured in return for access to natural resources. The procurement process goes through various types of political and social networks, including ethnic ties that exploit geographical proximity. Leaders of rebellions may also see conflict as an industry in which looting generates profits. Leaders of rebellions are driven by a desire to amass fortunes, and masses join them in anticipation of a share in the loot. Given their geographical concentration, natural resources are an essentially 'lootable commodity' and conflicts predominantly erupt in regions with economies that are highly dependent on natural resource extraction because of prevalent greed among political actors (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004, as cited in Varsheny, 2007; p. 285).

The problem in the four states feeds from the resource wealth in the eastern regions of DRC, where actors from the four countries thrive in the economy of conflict. It can be noted that "across the country, the security situation has deteriorated markedly as government authority has collapsed, emboldening rival militia groups who hold sway over large areas of territory, often competing for the DRC's rich resources" (Burke, 2018). However, the argument is not as simplistic. It is evident that "minerals have been a powerful factor in the conflicts, but the exact relationship between DRC's resource wealth and the waging of war is harder to decipher than mainstream discourse captures" (Lyall, 2017). The argument is that while rebels make money from mineral resources, it is not their primary motivation, since most of them do not control the resources but finance their activities through levying taxes from households and from transporters of illegally extracted minerals. The proliferation of armed groups which are active in the four countries is fuelled by the motivation for profits within ungoverned and privatised public spaces.

External support and proxy warfare are also connectors of conflict and promoters of instability from one country to the other. These forms of support involve both state and non-state actors receiving and providing assistance. The support varies in magnitude and type. Some actors seek influence by backing one side against

the other directly by providing troops, or indirectly by supplying arms, funding and logistical support. The interactions among the four states resemble an intense competition for regional influence, primarily between Rwanda and Uganda, and to some extent DRC. This plays out through states forming coalitions with rebel groups to undermine fellow states in an attempt to further their regional influence. Rebel groups are often aided by governments to undermine fellow governments. In Uganda, the Museveni rebellion that culminated in his ascendancy to power in 1987 hugely benefited from the support of Tutsi refugees who enlisted in his rebel group, the National Resistance Army (NRA). An estimated 20-25% of the NRA was Tutsi, including the current Rwandan leader President Kagame (Reyntjens, 2005). Museveni would later play a key role in the armed return of the Tutsis to Rwanda under the political-military movement Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF). The RPF invaded Rwanda with some form of support from Uganda, but the attempt to seize power in 1990 was aborted. Negotiations for a transitional government, which resulted in the Arusha ceasefire agreement signed in August 1993 to accommodate the two ethnic rivals, failed. This fanned ethnic tensions and was soon followed by the 1994 genocide, which created yet another mass flow of refugees into eastern DRC's Kivu Province. This pattern of refugee flow shifted from Uganda and Burundi to DRC, with a reversal of fortunes for the Hutus this time. Burundi was under a Tutsi government and Uganda being friendly to the Tutsi movement RPF, DRC was the only available option for the Hutus and their Intarahamwe militia. The militias continued their resistance against the RPF from Eastern DRC. This has created what Lemachand (1997) terms "crisis generating refugees", in that refugee camps were frequently used as rebel recruitment bases. Rwanda's concern with DRC stems from this contextual fact. Additionally, the DRC has provided sanctuary for the weakened Lord Resistance Army (LRA) rebels from Uganda. The rebellious refugees provided the backdrop for the Uganda-Burundi-Rwanda invasion of the DRC in 1997 (1st Congo war) which supported Kabila's rebellion that deposed Mobuto. A year later, Kabila's sponsors turned against him, leading to the 2nd Congo War. The classic categorisation of conflicts as interstate and intrastate in the Great Lakes Region seems inapplicable, since the conflicts tend to expand geographically and their epicentre shifts from one locus to another (Kanyangara, 2016).

Kagame was once a friend to Museveni, but at the time of this paper's writing, the two have turned into foes, raising fears of a potential military confrontation. Relations between Rwanda and Uganda, peer competitors in the security complex, openly soured in 2019 after Rwanda blocked Ugandan cargo trucks from entering its territory at the busiest crossing point, Katuna. It also barred its nationals from crossing into Uganda. Rwandan Foreign Minister Richard Sezibera accused Uganda of offering assistance to two foreign-based Rwandan rebel groups — Rwanda National Congress (RNC) and Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). Back in 2018, Uganda accused the DRC and the UN for preserving the ADF, opening possibilities for a future return of Ugandan forces into the DRC. Burundi has also accused Rwanda of fanning instability in its domestic affairs.

Lessons for the AfSol Approach

The GLR security complex has significant levels of security interdependence among state and non-state actors, making it impossible to only direct attention to states when AfSol considers sustainable interventions. Security interdependence in the region involves substantial interaction among these units but mostly in a manner

that has favoured insecurity. The marked line of security interaction is transnational, involving both state and non-state actors through processes of clustering, contagion/diffusion and connectedness. Interstate security dynamics in the GLR are typically spill-overs of domestic dynamics, particularly refugee flows, violence targeting foreigners as well as civil strife. In that sense, security interaction in the region is generated more by weakness than by strength; failure to contain internal threats which in turn affect neighbours (horizontal effects of internal dynamics).

The most common conflicts involve an alliance between a state(s) and an insurgency or rebel group on one side facing a similarly structured alliance on the other. It is uncommon to find states in the GLR engaged in substantial security interactions on their own without involvement of rebel groups. Such patterns have obvious boundaries and the proximity or geographical distance among the states and rebel groups transforms the security dilemma dramatically. The general pattern is that each country sits at the centre of a set of security interactions connecting it to its immediate neighbours. Security and insecurity are best understood from a regional perspective, as most issues are internal but regionalised. The GLR is Africa's own 'Middle East' – tense, volatile, combustible and driven by the old agenda of security (military threats) when other regions are gravitating towards the 'new'. In the whole of Africa, the GLR countries are among the best exporters of insecurity. War and rebellion are the export commodities of choice. At least five lessons can be deduced for input into the AfSol approach:

i. Common elements exploit geographic proximity to socialise the GLR states into a relationship of insecurity. Transnational alliances and counter-alliances between and among states and rebel groups suggest the existence of common factors that exploit spatial proximity to socialise the four states into a complex web of insecurity. Despite the tensions and conflicts among the states and ethnic groups, strong ties do exist and this presents an opportunity to build peace through AfSol. The colonial legacy is a permanent scar on the region's security conundrum. It cannot be wished away but can only be accepted and confronted pragmatically. Parenthetically, the causes of insecurity in one state and the various actors involved help to determine the security dynamics in the four states. Therefore, insecurity in one state cannot be adequately addressed or analysed to the exclusion of others. The classical distinction between inter-state and intra-state threats is blurred and the locus of insecurity is ever mutating. The cause of conflict in one country can frequently be found in a neighbouring one, with events in one country often triggering reactions and repercussions in another because of geographical proximity. Indeed, and as Tobler's First Law of Geography suggests, all things are connected but closer things are more connected. The conflicts feed off and reinforce each other and as such the success of AfSol initiatives at a national level will be enhanced when they are implemented with a regional focus, complemented by simultaneous and complementary actions across the four countries.

ii. The GLR is a conflict formation security complex. Fear, rivalry and mutual perceptions of threat define the patterns of security interdependence, resulting in enmity and by extension what this paper has termed 'geo-insecurity'. Alliances and coalitions between states and rebel groups have evolved out of aggressive intents more so than from constructive ones.

iii. Ethnicity is real in the four states but may well be instrumentalised by political elites. The problem with ethnicity may be the political elites that exploit and intensify ethnic rivalries to legitimate their claims to power. It is argued that "expressions of solidarity alongside common identities, as communities struggle for and pursue control of political power against each other within and outside defined national boundaries, are a common feature in the region" (Obuoga, 2016; p.12). The underlying problem relates to weak states in geographic proximity that cannot, individually or collectively, respond to the multiple threats to their security, as state weakness is itself a source of multiple threats (elite, factional, communal and ethnic). After all, the overplayed song of ethnicity may turn out to be a platitude. The underlying factor is state weakness. With strong institutions and structures, and not strong men, ethnicity may be better managed.

iv. The rebel problem is linked to state actors. Most of the rebel movements in the region do not exist hermetically; they enjoy significant support from one or a combination of the four states who amplify the problem. Part of the political vocation of elites in this region has been to fan instability in other countries, either by hosting rebel groups or extending support to them to undermine fellow governments. The solution to the rebel question lies within the same states that harbour and succour the movements. The M23 rebels were only defeated when Uganda and Rwanda cut ties with the group. Similarly, the CNDP and RCD collapsed when Rwanda withheld support. The AfSol approach needs to explore appropriate interventions that can pressure states to sever ties with the insurgency conglomerates.

v. The old agenda for security dominates the GLR security complex. Whereas other regions are shifting to a 'new agenda' discourse for security, that comprises of non-traditional and non-military issues (low politics), this region is unfortunately still trapped in the abyss of the 'old' security agenda and is still bogged down by predominantly military threats (high politics). The legacy of armed rebellion is an anti-thesis to the recommended style of democracy. Experiments with democratisation and elections are frequently accompanied by tensions and renewals of historical ethnic rivalries (DRC, Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda have all been affected as such). It is therefore premature and needless for AfSol to engage with the 'new' when the region is still reeling from the 'old' issues of security.

Conclusion

Applying the RSCT to the GLR shows that the sub-system/region is in security distress because of structural and proximate factors that exploit geographical proximity in order to spread insecurity and conflict. The multiplicity of actors, the four states and their respective rebel movements define the dynamics of security. The resultant patterns of enmity are prominent and those of amity are rare, only emerging for aggressive intents. This gives rise to a security complex that is typically a conflict formation characterised by fear, suspicion, rivalry and mutual perceptions of threat. The GLR is thus a regional insecurity complex more than it is a security complex. Therefore, Africa is faced with the realities of a region with conflicts that are complex, seemingly intractable and have for long resisted intervention efforts. The existence of AfSol, however, continues to offer some modicum of hope if lessons are learnt. As such, five lessons have emerged in this paper and are shared: i) Common factors exploit geographical proximity to socialise the GLR states into a relationship of insecurity; ii) The GLR is a conflict formation security complex; iii) Ethnicity may not be the cause of insecurity in the GLR; it may be instrumentalised by political elites: iv) The rebel problem is linked to state actors; and v) The old agenda for security dominates the GLR security complex.

References

Austvoll, M. (2005). Transnational Ethnic Dimensions of Third-Party Interventions in Civil Conflicts. MA thesis, Department of Political Science, University of Oslo.

Burke, J. (2018). The wars will never stop - millions flee bloodshed as Congo falls apart. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/03/millions-flee-bloodshed-as-congos-army-steps-up-fight-with-rebels-in-east.

Buzan, B & Waever, O. (2003). Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Carter, K. M & Straus, S. (2019). Changing Patterns of Political Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa. Retrieved from https://oxfordre.com/politics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.001.0001/. Cunningham, K. G and Seymour, L. J. M. (2012). Identity Issues and Civil War: Ethnic and Religious Divisions. Retrieved from http://www.saramitchell.org/kcunningham_chapter.pdf

Dagne, T. (2011). The Democratic Republic of Congo: Background and Current Developments. CRS Report for Congress. Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R40108.pdf.

Fearon, J. D. (2006). Ethnic Mobilisation and Ethnic Violence. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/254428781

Forsberg, E. (2014a). Diffusion in the Study of Civil Wars: A Cautionary Tale. International Studies Review, 16 (2), 188-198.

Forsberg, E. (2014b). Transnational Transmitters: Ethnic Kinship Ties and Conflict Contagion 1946–2009. International Interactions, 40 (2), 143-165.

Forsberg, E. (2016). Transnational Dimensions of Civil Wars: Clustering, Contagion and Connectedness. In: D. T Mason & Mitchel, M. S (Eds) What Do We Know About Civil Wars (pp. 75-92). Retrieved from https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/2fd0/74363db5f426e0819e931bf5fa79673188a1.pdf

Ghins, L. (2019). Fragility and Uneven Aid in the African Great Lakes Region. Retrieved from https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/africaatlse/2019/03/19/fragility-and-uneven-aid-in-the-african-great-lakes/.

Gleditsch, K. S. 2007. Transnational Dimensions of Civil War. Journal of Peace Research, 44(3), 293-309.

Gleditsch, K, S. (2002). All Politics Is Local: The Diffusion of Conflict, Integration, and Democratisation. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Horowitz, D. L. (1998). Structure and Strategy in Ethnic Conflict. Paper prepared for the Annual World Bank Conference on Development Economics, April 20-21. Retrieved from http://web.ceu.hu/cps/bluebird/eve/statebuilding/horowitz.pdf

International Crisis Group (ICG). (2009). Congo: A Comprehensive Strategy to Disarm the FDLR, Africa Report No. 151. Retrieved from http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/africa/central-africa/dr-congo/151%20Congo%20-%20A%20Comprehensive%20Strategy%20to%20Disarm%20the%20FDLR%20-%20ENGLISH.

ICG. (2005). The Congo: Solving the FDLR Problem Once and for All. Africa Briefing. Nairobi: International Crisis Group. Retrieved from http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/africa/central-africa/dr-congo/B025-the-congo-solving-the-fdlr-problem-once-and-for-all.aspx

Institute of Peace and Security Studies (IPSS) Report. (2014). African Solutions for Peace and Security (AfSol). IPSS Workshop, 26-27 September 2014. Retrieved from https://afsolblog.org.wordpress.com

Jason, S., Verweijen, J & Baaz, M. (2013). The National Army and Armed Groups in Eastern Congo: Untangling the Gordian Knot of Insecurity. Rift Valley Institute.

Kambudzi, A. M. (2013). China's Non-Interference Policy: Towards Peace Enhancement in Africa. In M. G. Berhe & L. Hongwu (Eds.), China-Africa Relations: Governance, Peace and Security (pp. 29-45). Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Institute of Peace and Security Studies.

Kanyangara, P. (2016). Conflict in the Great Lakes Region: Root Causes, Dynamics and Consequences. Conflict Trends, 1, 3-11.

Khadiagala, G. M. (2017). Security and Governance in the Great Lakes Region: An Introduction. In Khadiagala, G. M. (Ed.), War and Peace in the Great Lakes Region. Retrived from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318342729.

Lemarchand, R. (1997). Patterns of State Collapse and Reconstruction in Central Africa: Reflections on the Crisis in the Great Lakes Region. Retrieved from http://africa.ufl.edu/asq/v1/3/2htm.

Lemarchand, R. (2009). The Dynamics of Violence in Central Africa. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Le Sage, A. (2007). African Counterterrorism Cooperation: Assessing Regional and Sub-regional Initiatives. Potomac Books.

Lyall, G. (2017). Rebellion and Conflict Minerals in North Kivu. Retrieved from https://www.accord.org.za/conflict-trends/rebellion-conflict-minerals-north-kivu/.

Margaret, P. (2010). The Historical and Social Context of the Conflict in Northern Uganda. Retrieved from https://www.rug.nl/research/portal/files/14692174/02_c2.pdf.

Mpagi, C. M. (2017). Understanding the resurgence of ADF rebel group in Uganda, 22 years on. Retrieved from https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/news/ea/Understanding-the-resurgence-of-ADF-rebel-group-in-Uganda/4552908-4620038-not2vxz/index.html.

Ndabuisi, C. A. (2016). African Solutions to African Problems: Assessing the African Union's Application of the Endogenous Conflict Resolution Approaches. PhD Thesis. South Africa: University of Kwazulu Natal.

Obuoga, B. O. (2016). Building Regional Capacity for Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in the Great Lakes Region. Conflict Trends, 1, 12-18.

Reyntjens, R. (2005). The privatisation and criminalisation of public space in the Geo-politics of the Great Lakes Region. Retrieved from http://journals.cambridge.org/S0022278X05001230a.pdf.

Rupiya, M. (2016). Regional Intervention in Fragile African States: Comparative Case Studies: Any Lessons Leant? African Solutions Journal, 1 (1), 1-28.

Project on Violent Conflict. (2015). Democratic Front for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR). Retrieved from https://www.start.umd.edu/baad/narratives/democratic-front-liberation-rwanda-fdlr

Salehyan, I & Gleditsch, K. S. (2006). Refugee Flows and the Spread of Civil War. International Organisation, 60(2), 335–366.

Shyaka, A. (2008). Understanding the Conflicts in the Great Lakes Region: An Overview. Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies, 1 (1), 5-12.

Spittaels, S & Filip, H. (2008). Mapping Conflict Motives: Eastern DRC. Fatal Transactions. Antwerp: International Peace Information Service. Retrieved from http://www.ipisresearch.be/maps/Oost-Congo/20080506_Mapping_Eastern_DRC.pdf.

Varshney, A. (2007). Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflict. In: B, Carles & C, Susan, C (Eds). The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics (274-294). Retrieved from ashutoshvarshney.net/wp.content/files_mf/varshneyethnicityandethnicconflict.pdf/

Waters, N. 2017. Tobler's first Law of Geography. In: D, Richardson., N, Castree., M, F, Goodchild., A, Robayashi., W, Liu., & R. A. Marston (Eds). The International Encyclopedia of Geography. Retrieved from DOI: 10.1002/9781118786352.wbieg1011.